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The Nexus Of Covert Foreign Interference Attempt In India’s 2024 Lok Sabha Elections

[June 5, 2024](#) / [The Commune](#)

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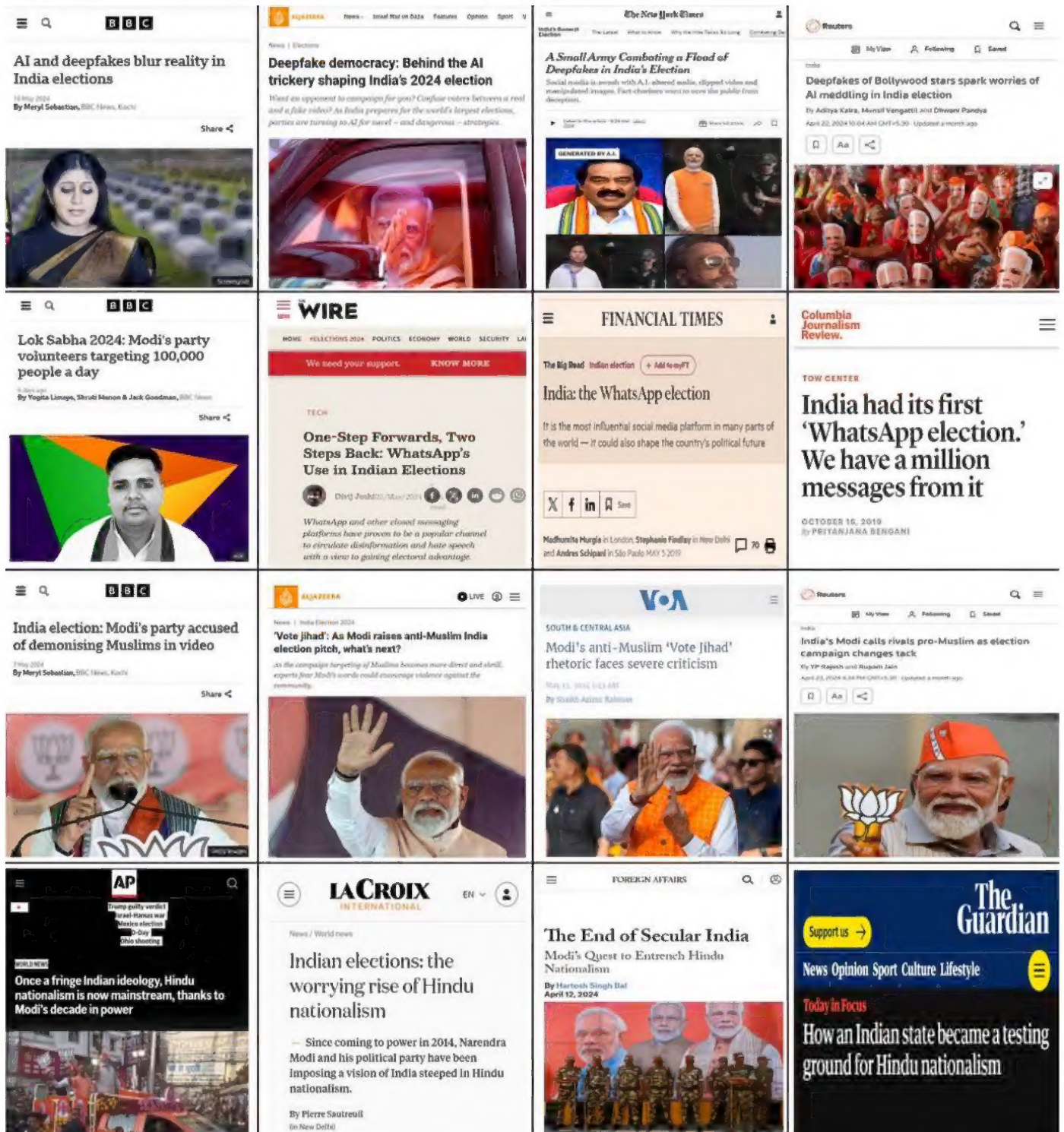
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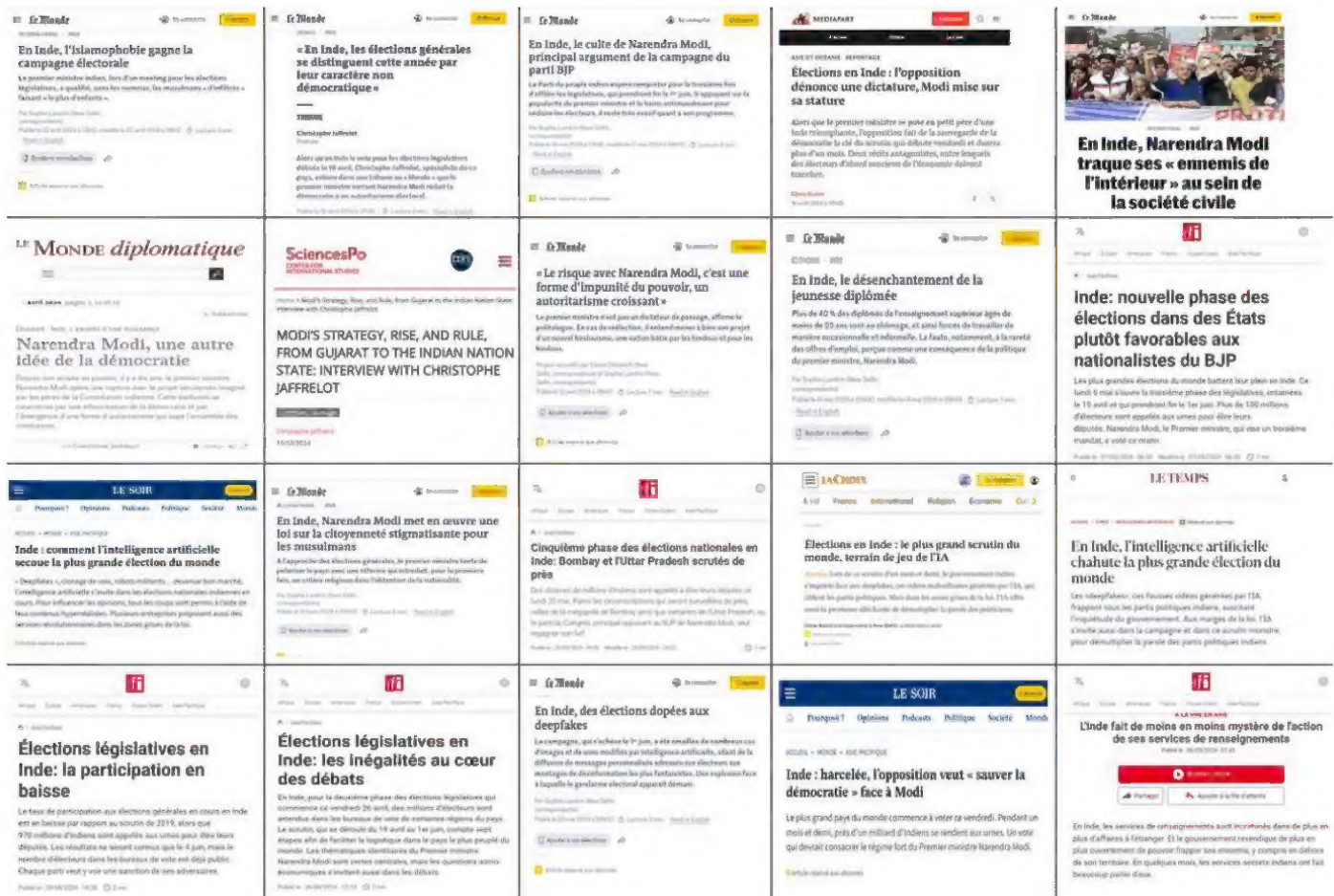
DisInfo Lab, an online media and non-profit entities watchdog, has exposed a coordinated effort by foreign actors to clandestinely influence the outcome of the 2024 Indian election. Through a series of revelations, it has alleged that millions of dollars have been funneled from nations such as China to Israel with the aim of impacting the election results. Of particular concern is the involvement of Western powers, including the European Union and the United States.

The 2024 elections witnessed unprecedented levels of foreign interference, with foreign media coverage overwhelmingly negative and blatantly biased. Western media outlets employed exaggerated language and double standards, injecting a predetermined narrative into online discourse akin to a competitive mud-slinging contest.

For instance, the BBC published articles with titles like “*AI and deepfakes blur reality in Indian elections*” and “*Lok Sabha 2024: Modi’s party volunteers targeting 100,000 people a day,*” while also accusing Modi’s party of demonizing Muslims in videos. Al Jazeera, funded by the Qatari government, ran stories such as “*Deepfake democracy: Behind the AI trickery shaping India’s 2024 election*” and “*Vote Jihad: As Modi raised Anti-Muslim India election pitch, what’s next?*” Meanwhile,



Certain media outlets received implicit or explicit funding, while others were backed by organizations with questionable agendas, such as crafting biased narratives sourced from dubious origins like "random WhatsApp groups" or portraying individuals supported by Pakistan in a positive light. Amidst this cacophony, a disturbing effort to interfere at the micro level and shape voter perceptions was underway. Christophe Jaffrelot, an Indologist writes extensively on India, emerged as a key figure orchestrating this narrative, particularly promoting a divisive discourse around the caste census, originating from France.



The French media, notably LeMonde, LeSoir, France24, among others, exhibited an unusual level of interest in the Indian elections, often citing Jaffrelot as an expert on various Indian affairs.

GrandContinent

Francia España

Entrevistas - La India de Modi en el año de las grandes elecciones

La India de Modi en el año de las grandes elecciones, una conversación con Christophe Jaffrelot



CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT — Dentro de un mes, casi mil millones de electores indios serán llamados a las urnas para unas elecciones que durarán hasta junio. ¿Se sabe ya el resultado? ¿Cuáles serán las principales temáticas de la campaña? ¿Qué datos se utilizarán para analizar y qué herramientas se emplearán? ¿Cómo podría reforzarse a Modi?

Para seguir estas elecciones extraordinarias, hemos pedido al especialista Christophe Jaffrelot que nos ayude a coordinar una serie de publicaciones.

LA CROIX INTERNATIONAL EN

News / World news

"Nationalists are aiming to transform India into a Hindu State"

— Exclusive interview with Christophe Jaffrelot, research director at Ceri-Sciences Po, who analyzes how the ruling BJP party, a favorite in the upcoming Indian parliamentary elections, has instrumentalized Hinduism.

By Malo Tresca

April 16th, 2024 at 05:00 am (Europe/Paris), Updated April 16th, 2024 at 10:29 am (Europe/Paris)

FINANCIAL TIMES



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi among his supporters at a campaign rally earlier this month © Reuters/Thalita/Getty Images

The Big Read **Narendra Modi** + Add to myFT

Is the 'cult of Modi' starting to lose its lustre?

Modi's body language, including his voice, took on a "distinctively masculine, muscular overtone" during his time as chief minister, political scientist **Christophe Jaffrelot** writes in his book *Gujarat under Modi*.

VOA

SOUTH & CENTRAL ASIA

Hindu nationalism now mainstream, thanks to Modi's decade in power

April 19, 2024 9:37 AM

By Associated Press

For the group, Indian civilization is inseparable from Hinduism, while critics say its philosophy is rooted in Hindu supremacy.

Today, the RSS has spawned a network of affiliated groups, from student and farmer unions to nonprofits and vigilante organizations often accused of violence. Their power — and legitimacy — ultimately comes from the BJP, which emerged from the RSS.

"Until Modi, the BJP had never won a majority on their own in India's Parliament," said **Christophe Jaffrelot**, an expert on Modi and the Hindu right. "For the RSS, it is unprecedented."

G V S

Home Latest News Analysis Opinion Business Trending Science & Health

Modi's Dangerous Politics of Fear is threat to Future of India? Interview with Christophe Jaffrelot

Pragna Miras, Managing Editor, GVS news, sits in with Christophe Jaffrelot to discuss World's largest elections in India

By News Desk / 21 April 2024

THE DIPLOMAT

INTERVIEWS POLITICS SOUTH ASIA

Christophe Jaffrelot on What Makes Brand Modi Successful

"Like many populists, Modi is a chameleon — this is his brand. Everyone can find in him what he or she is looking for."

By **Sudha Ramachandran**

April 18, 2024

ECPS MONITOR PROGRAMS JOURNALS

Professor Jaffrelot: India under Modi Shares Similar Patterns with Israel in Their 'Ethnic Democracies'

May 6, 2024



KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

Video: Why Gujarat is key to understanding India under Modi

Poll to Poll 2024: A year of elections around the world

19 April 2024

In this video as part of the Poll to Poll series, PROFESSOR **CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT** argues that, to understand the political strategies employed by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one must look at his time as Chief Minister of the state of Gujarat.

LA CROIX INTERNATIONAL EN

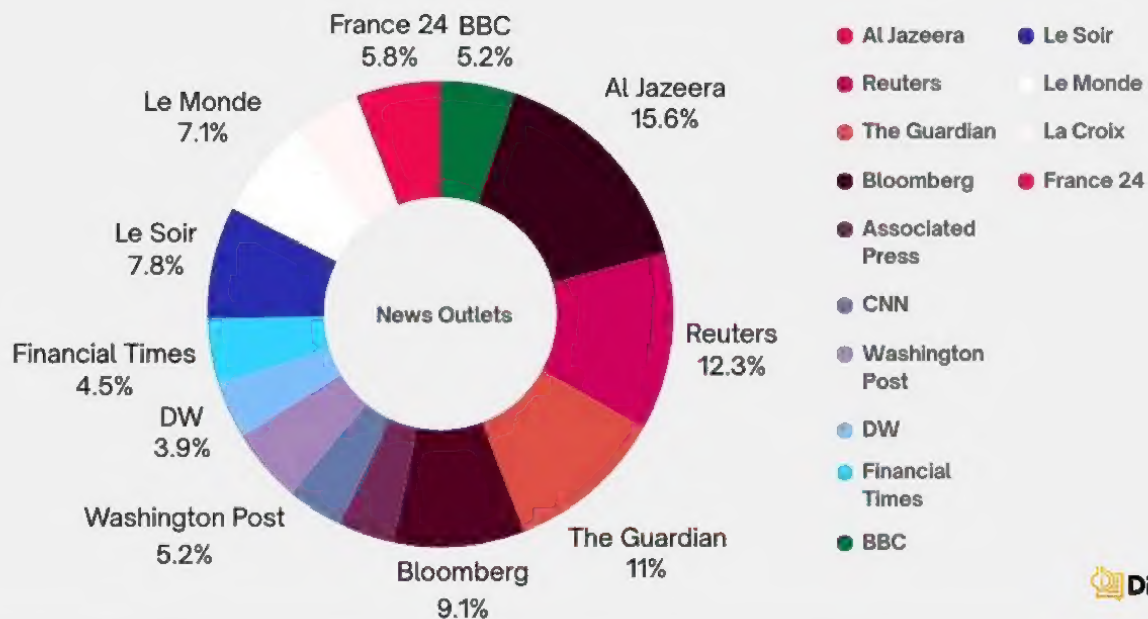
News / Culture

What is "Hindutva," the ideology of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi?

Hindutva thinkers developed their ideology within the context of the India's fight against British colonization and the Westernization of Hindu society, and primarily centered on religious and societal claims. In a 1993 book, **Christophe Jaffrelot**, a political scientist and expert on India, explained that Hindutva "was conceived as a concept of ethnic community." According to this ideology, the Hindu community forms the "matrix" of the Indian community, while Christians and Muslims are considered mere add-ons.

Surprisingly, the French media showed an unusual level of interest in the Indian elections 2024 more than other medias of the world.

News Coverage Distribution of International Media on Indian Elections



Jaffrelot, along with his associate Gilles Verniers, operating through the Trivedi Centre for Political Data (TCPD) at Ashoka University, aggressively propagated the notion that lower castes were underrepresented in Indian politics, citing statistics from the 2014 Lok Sabha. However, their stance swiftly shifted when the 2019 Lok Sabha elections revealed an increase in representation from lower castes.



NEWS » NEWS » OPINION » NALIN MEHTA WRITES: 5 REASONS CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT AND ASHOKA UNIVERSITY DATA ON BJP, CASTE ARE WRONG

12-MIN READ

Nalin Mehta Writes: 5 Reasons Christophe Jaffrelot and Ashoka University Data on BJP, Caste Are Wrong

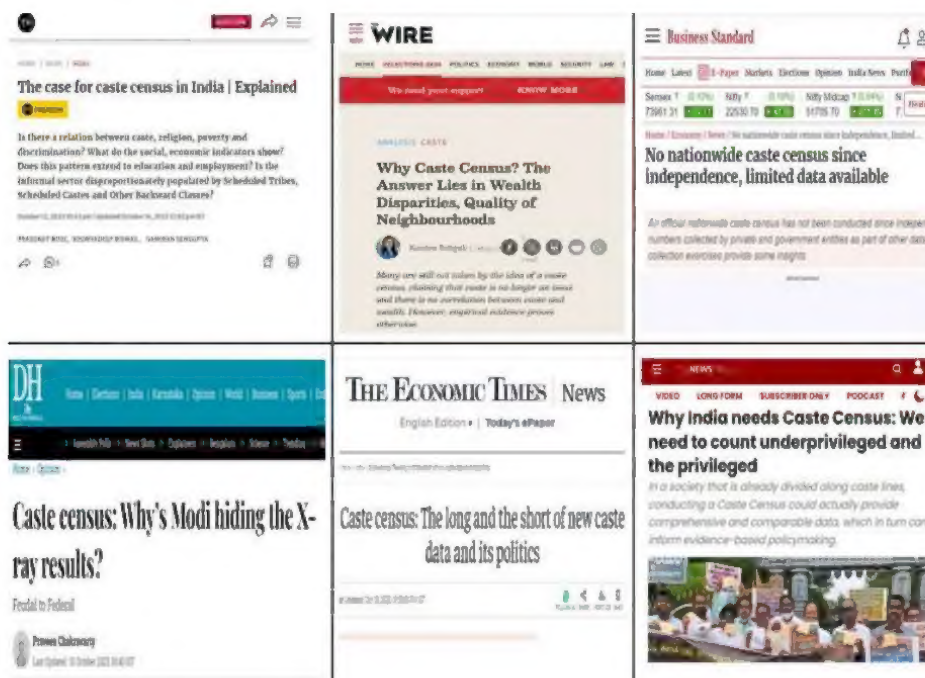
• Curated By: [Nalin Mehta](#) • Last Updated: JANUARY 24, 2022, 16:13 IST



Instead of looking at new evidence carefully and responding with reasoned evidence-based critique, respected scholars have resorted to shooting the messenger and stooping to demonstrable falsehoods.

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While the duo's difficulty in accurately categorizing castes sparks its own debate, it hasn't impacted Jaffrelot's media "credibility." His emergence as a proponent of the caste census narrative has actually led to an unprecedented level of references to him across various media outlets in a remarkably short span of time.





Jaffrelot Christophe
@jaffrelotc

...

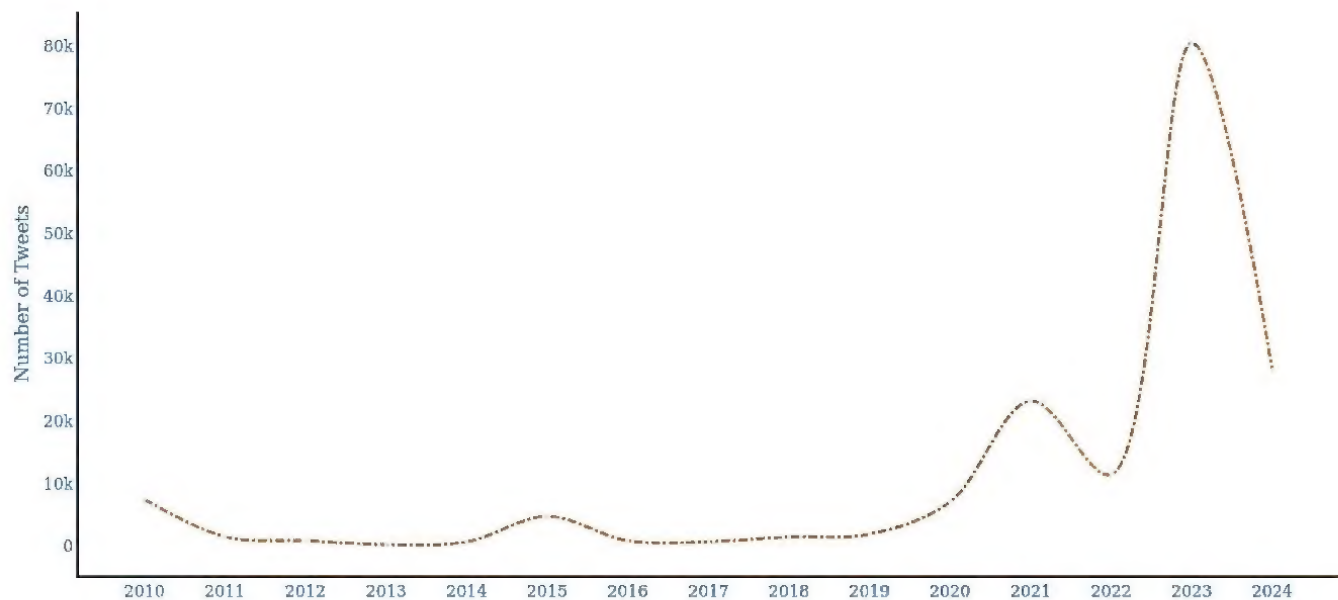
Prannv Dhawan and I show that the power that has been given again to state gvts to identify OBCs may not make much difference if the 50% cap remains and if there is no caste census. @prannv99 @KingsIndiaInst @CERISciencesPo

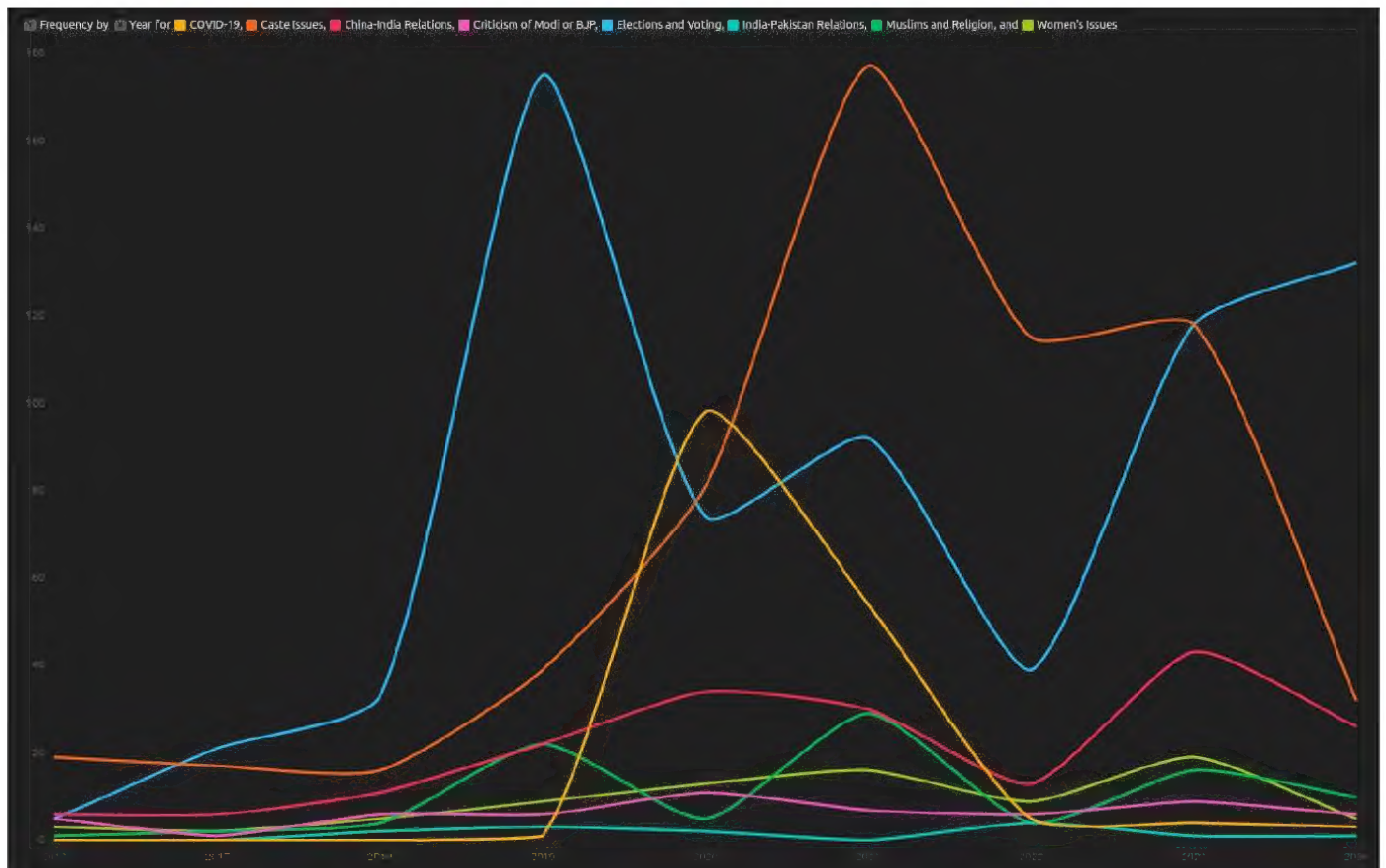


From indianexpress.com

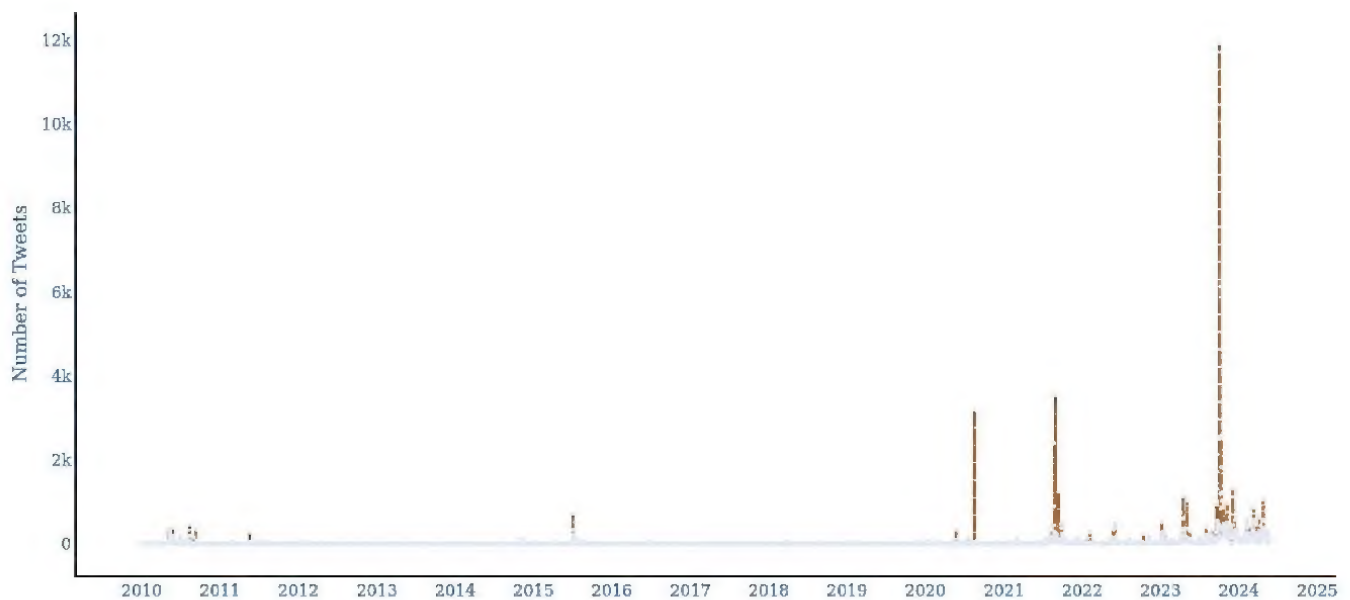
9:09 AM · Sep 4, 2021

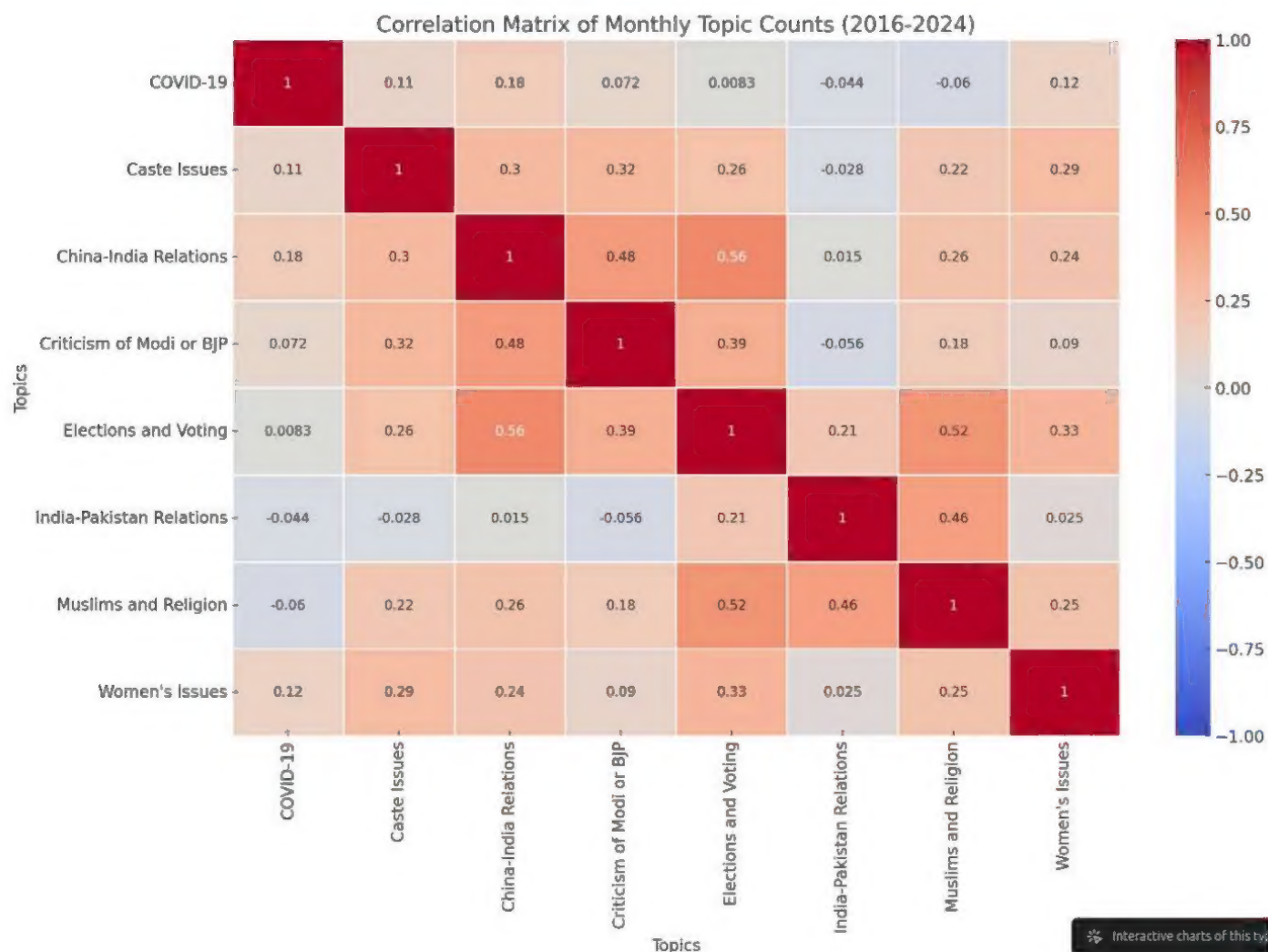
Upon delving into social media discussions, we can observe a consistent trend mirroring research findings. Mentions of Jaffrelot in relation to Caste census reached unprecedented levels. This surge coincided with Jaffrelot's publication of a paper advocating for a caste census in September 2021, suggesting a significant influence on the discourse.





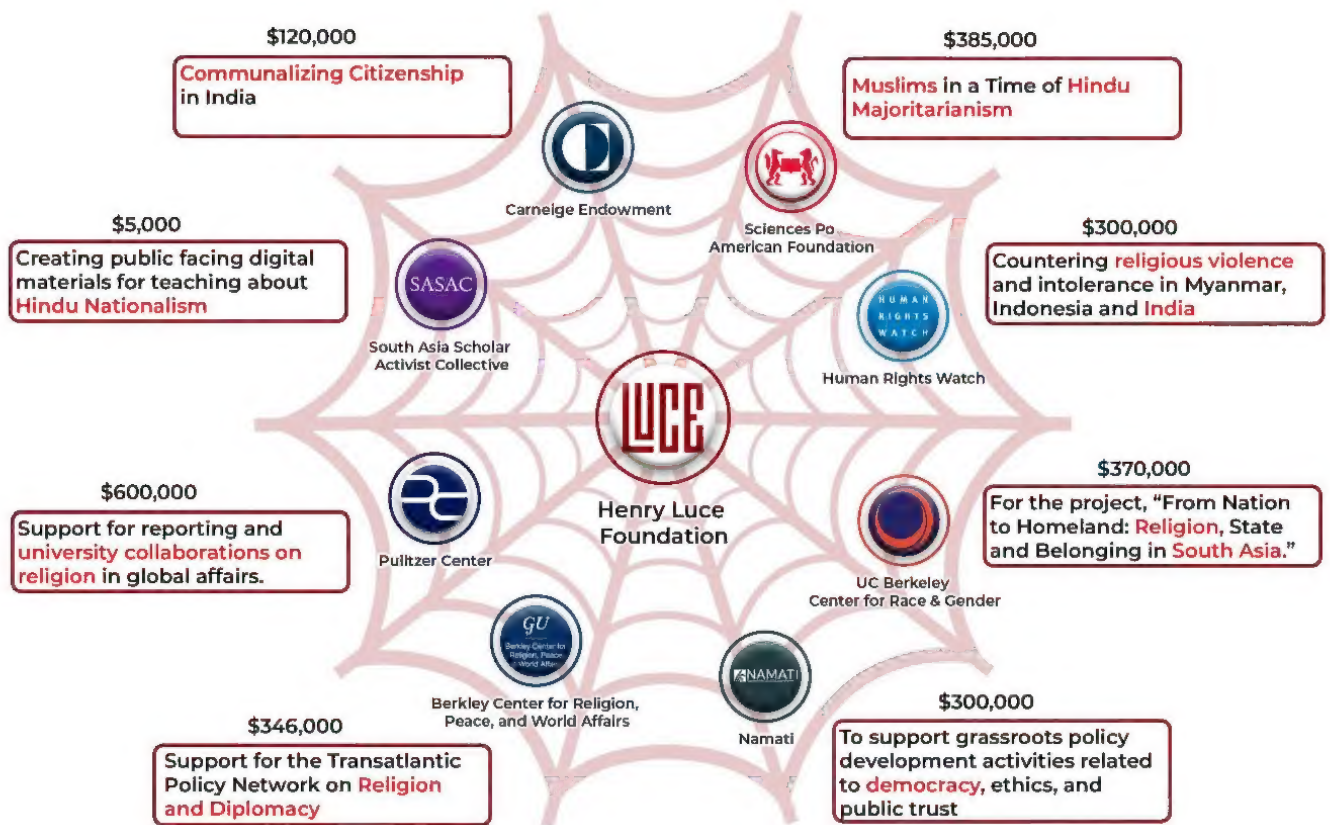
However, what was particularly noteworthy was that the conversation around Caste Census didn't arise organically, as evidenced by posting patterns. There seemed to be no inherent stimulus for these discussions, akin to observations in news media spanning from India to France. It was almost as if there was an invisible orchestrator guiding the narrative.





It turned out there was indeed an influential force at play, one as potent as any. Concurrent with the discourse on caste and Christophe Jaffrelot's remarkable popularity, a parallel development unfolded. Jaffrelot had secured substantial funding from the US-based philanthropic entity, the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF), during a similar timeframe.

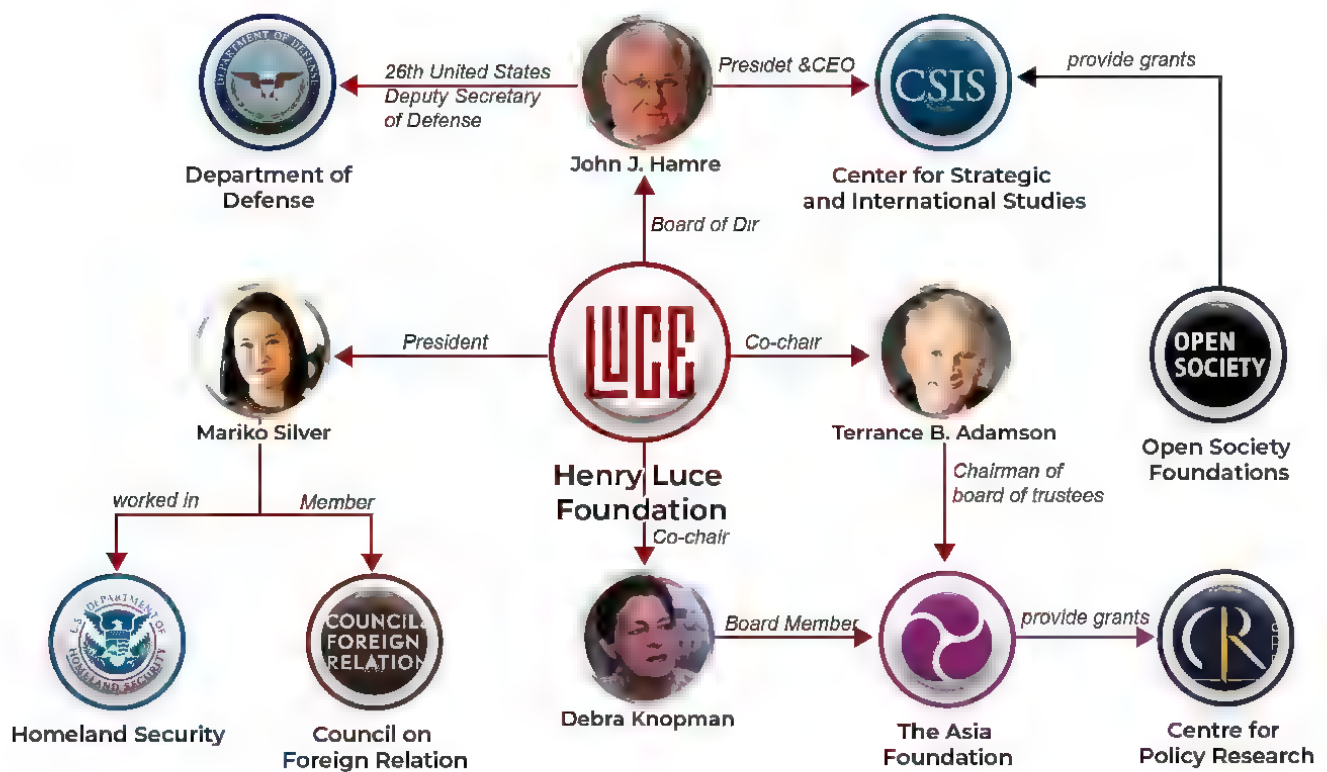
The Narrative Funding Web



Henry Luce Foundation (HLF) established by Henry Luce, renowned as the founder of TIME magazine, the HLF's connections to the deep state are lesser-known. Luce, born to Presbyterian Christian Missionaries and notably supported by another Presbyterian, Nancy McCormicks, had ties to the CIA's MockingBird project, which utilized media and journalists for covert operations. Luce provided cover for CIA operatives under TIME's auspices, and his involvement in significant CIA cover-ups is documented.



Despite the founder's proximity to the deep state, HLF is currently staffed with former US government officials, including a former Deputy Secretary of Defense. HLF collaborates closely with organizations such as AsiaFoundation, CFR, and CSIS.



What was the purpose of this funding? It was allocated as part of a project titled 'Muslims in a Time of Hindu Majoritarianism,' granting a substantial sum of \$385,000 to Jaffrelot for this endeavor. Such overtly biased subject matter would likely be deemed unacceptable for any other nation, yet it strangely passes muster when directed against India.

 HOME / GRANTS

For the project, “Muslims in a Time of Hindu Majoritarianism.

US Sciences Po Foundation

AMOUNT

\$385,000

AWARD DATE

March 4, 2020

LOCATION

New York, New York, United States, Mideast Region

PROGRAM

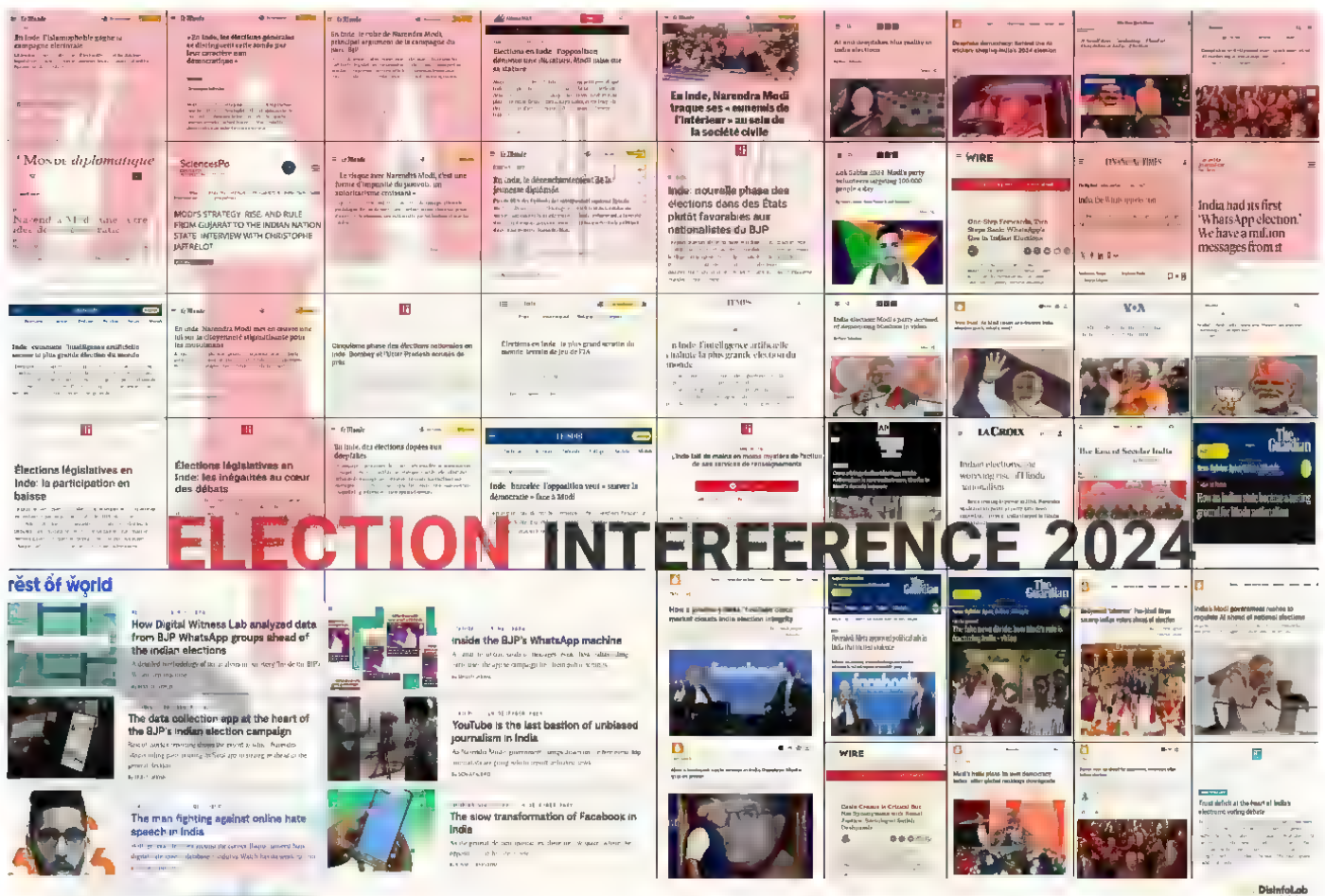
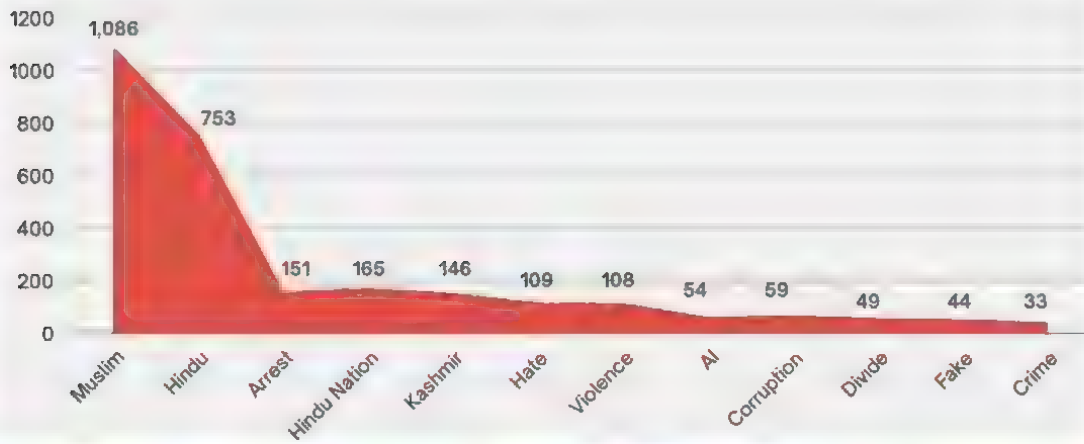
Religion in International Affairs

WEBSITE

<http://www.usscpo.org>

Remarkably, the entire narrative surrounding the elections seemed to align precisely with the narrative for which the HLF had pledged funding to the French expert as far back as 2020 ²¹, spanning three years. Additionally, funding was extended to various media outlets.

The below diagram showcases the keyword analysis of certain keywords which were used in the international news media articles. It was observed that the word "Muslim" was used 1,086 times followed by "Hindu Nation" with 165 times, "Kashmir" with 146 times, "Hate" and "Violence" 109 and 108 times respectively.



While the editorial boards of HLF and Time Magazine are purportedly independent entities, there seems to be an enigmatic force at play, as Time's coverage of Indian Elections 2024 closely echoed HLF's motives for supporting figures like Jaffrelot. This narrative permeated throughout various channels, appearing ubiquitous.



The narrative extends further, HLF has distributed funds to various other organizations focused on 'research' concerning India, many of which received funding around 2020/21, spanning three years until 2024. These organizations, known for their anti-India stance, were tasked with similar agendas.

Henry Luce Foundation Grants Beneficiaries

S. No.	Grantee	Year	Grants
1	South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC)	2023	\$5,000.00
2	Center For Race And Gender (UC Berkeley)	2021	\$370,000.00
3	Council on Foreign Relations	2021	\$125,000.00
4	Pulitzer Center	2021	\$100,000.00
5	Sciences Po U.S. Foundation	2020	\$385,000.00
6	Carnegie Endowment for International Peace	2020	\$120,000.00
7	Human Rights Watch	2020	\$300,000.00
8	Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs	2020	\$346,000.00
9	Council on Foreign Relations	2020	\$395,000.00
Total			\$2,146,000.00

For instance, Berkeley's Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs received a three-year grant of \$346,000 in 2021, culminating in the publication of a report in late 2023 titled "*The Hindu Right and India's Religious Diplomacy*."

BERKLEY CENTER
for Religion, Peace & World Affairs
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

\$346,000 Luce Grant to Fund the Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy at Georgetown University

WASHINGTON (January 27, 2021)—The Berkley Center has received a \$346,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation to fund the Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD), which will migrate from Cambridge University to Georgetown University as one of Georgetown's ongoing programs. The three-year grant will help the TPNRD to expand its public engagement, capitalize on opportunities to forge new partnerships, and fine-tune its method of fostering transatlantic diplomatic collaboration and policy-relevant scholarship in the field of religion and international affairs.

Judd Birdsall, project director of the TPNRD, said, "The move of the TPNRD project to the Berkley Center, the leading research institute of its kind, presents an exciting new chapter for the network. The international reputation and significant organizational capacity of the center will enhance the project's efforts to foster diplomatic collaboration and scholarship on religion and global affairs. I am deeply grateful to Georgetown for providing this new institutional base and to the Luce Foundation for their ongoing support."

In January 2021 Birdsall joined the Berkley Center as he continues to provide leadership for the TPNRD

Another recipient, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP), received \$120,000, producing articles on topics like "*Authoritarian repression, Hindu Nationalism, emerging Hindu Vote,*" among others.



COMMENTARY

Religion, Citizenship, and Belonging in India

As India commemorates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the country's independence from the British Raj, one question above all strikes at the heart of democracy's uncertain future: who belongs in today's India?



By Madhav Khosla and Milan Velishnev
Published on June 2, 2022

Original Article

Representation and Legitimacy in the Supreme Court: Adjudicating Law and Religion in India

Studies in Indian Politics 1-14

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DOI: 10.1177/232-0330221083064
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Raeesa Vakil¹

Abstract

This article presents the argument that the Supreme Court of India's jurisprudence on procedural bars to litigation is insufficient to address challenges that arise in cases involving religious rights. Examining the Court's views on standing (the right to litigate) in three key public interest decisions (the Sabarwal Temple case, the Ram Janmabhoomi case, and the triple talaq case), I argue that the Court has privileged a discretionary, ends-based reasoning over an approach based on principle and law, resulting in erratic and inconsistent outcomes. The result is an uncertain level of protection to minority rights in judicial processes.

Keywords

India, constitution, law, religion, majoritarianism, Supreme Court

Original Article

Religion-as-Ethnicity and the Emerging Hindu Vote in India

Studies in Indian Politics 1-14

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DOI: 10.1177/232-0330221083064
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Neelanjana Sircar¹

Abstract

Religious division formed the basis for the subcontinent's partition and has continued to be a major social cleavage in local relations. Yet remarkably religious parties have rarely been successful in India. This may be changing with an ascendant Bharatiya Janata Party mobilizing the Hindu vote. Accordingly, this article seeks to explicate the conditions under which successful religious parties may emerge. In order to do so, I conceive of electoral mobilization on religion as a form of ethnic mobilization, what I refer to as religion-as-ethnicity voting. I argue that religion-as-ethnicity voting emerges when the religious group meets certain spatial demographic criteria (density and pivotality) and when a governing party representing these interests can use state power to reify boundaries between religious groups. I use this framework to explain the emergence of the Hindu vote in the Indian state of Assam.

Keywords

Campaigns and elections, ethnic conflict, Indian democracy, religion and politics, voting and elections

Original Article

Hindu Nationalism: From Ethnic Identity to Authoritarian Repression

Studies in Indian Politics 1-17

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Pratap Bhanu Mehta¹

Abstract

This article reflects on the relationship between Hindu nationalism and democracy and how the former emerges from within democracy only to subvert it. The essay outlines important conceptual issues in the relationship between Hindu nationalism and democracy, discusses the relationship between the idea of a 'Hindu Rashtra' and 'Hindu Rajya', and delves into the complex interplay between Hindu nationalism and caste. This article ultimately argues that Hindu nationalism's alignment with authoritarianism in a political style does not simply corrode democracy but it also undermines all values. The objective of this analysis is not to provide a comprehensive explanation of the rise of Hindu nationalism, as much as to reflect on the ways in which its ideology operates at multiple levels.

Keyword

India, Hindu nationalism, BJP, secularism, democracy, authoritarianism

Original Article

Representation and Legitimacy in the Supreme Court: Adjudicating Law and Religion in India

Studies in Indian Politics 1-14

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Raeesa Vakil¹

Abstract

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Keywords

India, constitution, law, religion, majoritarianism, Supreme Court

Original Article

Reinventing the Republic: Faith and Citizenship in India²

Studies in Indian Politics 1-17

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DOI: 10.1177/232-0330221083068
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Niraja Gopal Jayal¹

Abstract

In India, a new legal regime and political ecosystem has been enacted for India's Muslim minority that effectively undermines the constitutional commitment to secularism. This article examines the legal, political, social, moral, and international implications of an assemblage of law and policy—namely, the Citizenship Amendment Act 2019, as well as two other initiatives, the National Register of Citizens and the National Population Register—that cumulatively animates an ambitious project to reinvent the nature of the Indian republic, from a pluralist, multi-ethnic and multi-religious civic community to a political community marked by ethno-religious majoritarianism.

Keywords

Citizenship, Citizenship Amendment Act, National Register of Citizens, minorities, religion

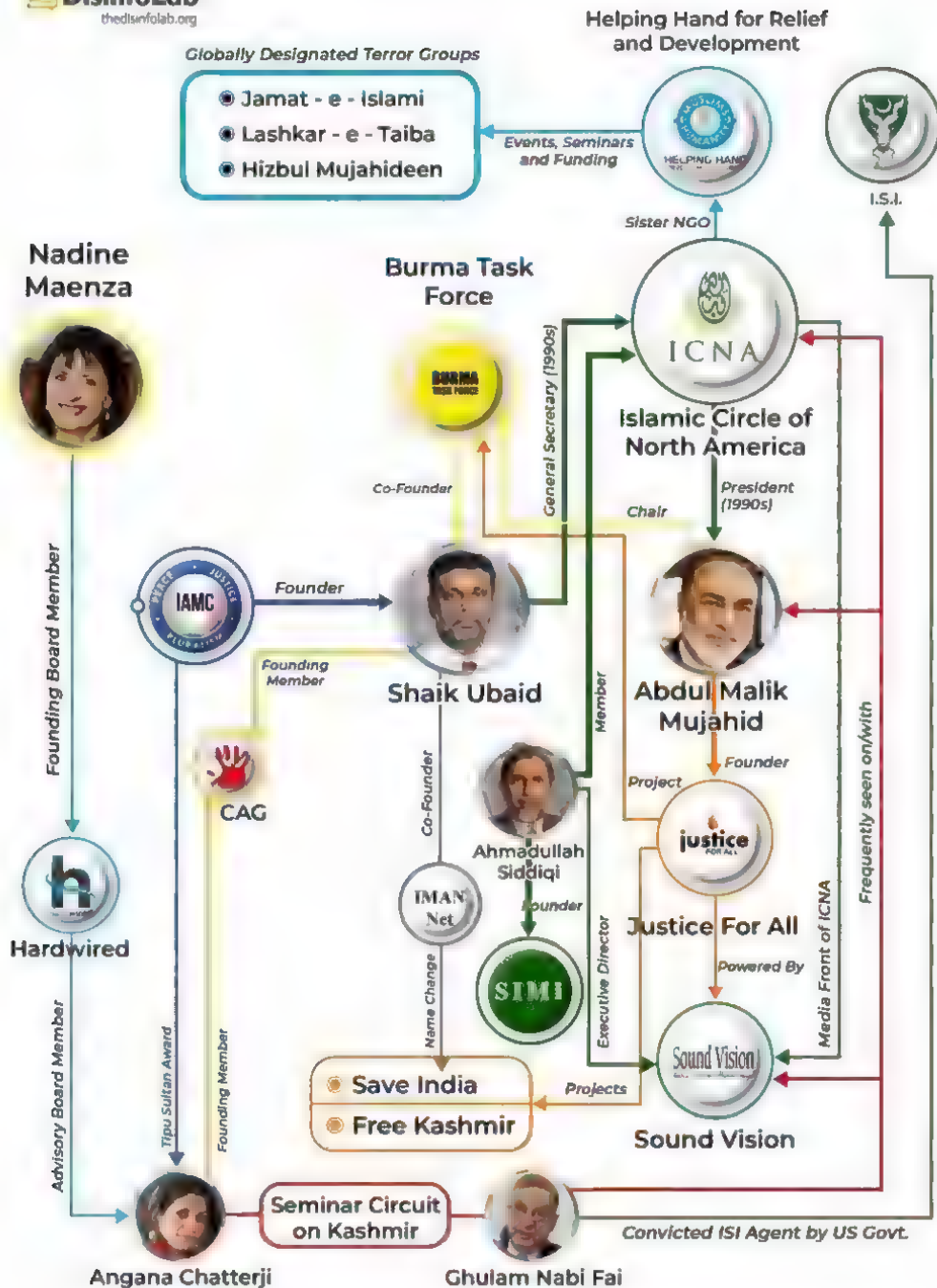
This isn't the first time CEIP received funding from HLF; in November 2018, they received \$40,000 for a project on "Religious Populism and the Future of Indian Democracy," coinciding with the publication of "The BJP in Power: Indian Democracy and Religious Nationalism" just prior to the 2019 elections. Human Rights Watch (HRW) was allocated \$300,000 from HLF to "document religious violence in Asia," with a focus on countries like India, Myanmar, and Indonesia, as indicated by the HRW URL.

HOME / GRANTS

Renewed support for research about and documentation of religious intolerance and violence in three countries in Asia.

Human Rights Watch

The story gets even more interesting. HLF has given funds to fronts with known affiliations with radical Islamists and even Pak-ISI that were exposed repeatedly for their anti-India propaganda the likes of Angana Chatterjee, famous for association with convicted SI mole Ghulam Nabi Fai



One of her organizations, PCRes-CRC, received a substantial sum of \$370,000 in April 2021 to investigate "fault-lines between citizenship, religion, and belonging" in South Asia. Notably, Jaffre ot collaborates with Angana on PCRes-acbcd.

Core Group:



Leti Volpp
Director, Center for Race & Gender

- Hosted event on "India Elections 2024: Hindu Nationalism, Ayodhya, and Dispossession"



Hatem Bazian
Director, Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project

- Founder of Students for Justice in Palestine
- Co-founder of American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)
- Member of Russell Tribunal on Kashmir



Angana P. Chatterji
Chair, Political Conflict, Gender, & People's Rights Initiative

- Close aide of convicted ISI mole Ghulam Nabi Fai
- Part of Kashmir syllabus of Stand with Kashmir
- Co-founder of the "International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-administered Kashmir" with Parvez Imroz in 2008.



Ariana Ceja
Associate Director, Center for Race & Gender

- Event Co-ordinator of "India Elections 2024: Hindu Nationalism, Ayodhya, and Dispossession"

PCRes Scholars:



Haley Duschinski

- Testimony against India in the United States Congress Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.



Parvez Imroz

- Co-founder of the "International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-administered Kashmir" with Angana Chatterji in 2008.
- Founder and President of the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS).



Christophe Jaffrelot

- Head of the Project "MUSLIMS IN INDIA" funded by Henry Luce Foundation.
- Chairperson of Trivedi Centre for Political Data.
- Research Director at CERI-SciencesPo/CNRS.



Khurram Parvez

- Program coordinator of Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Societies (JKCCS) and chairperson of Philippines-based NGO AFAD
- Arrested by NIA in NGO terror funding case.

PCRes Affiliates:



Pei-hsuan Wu

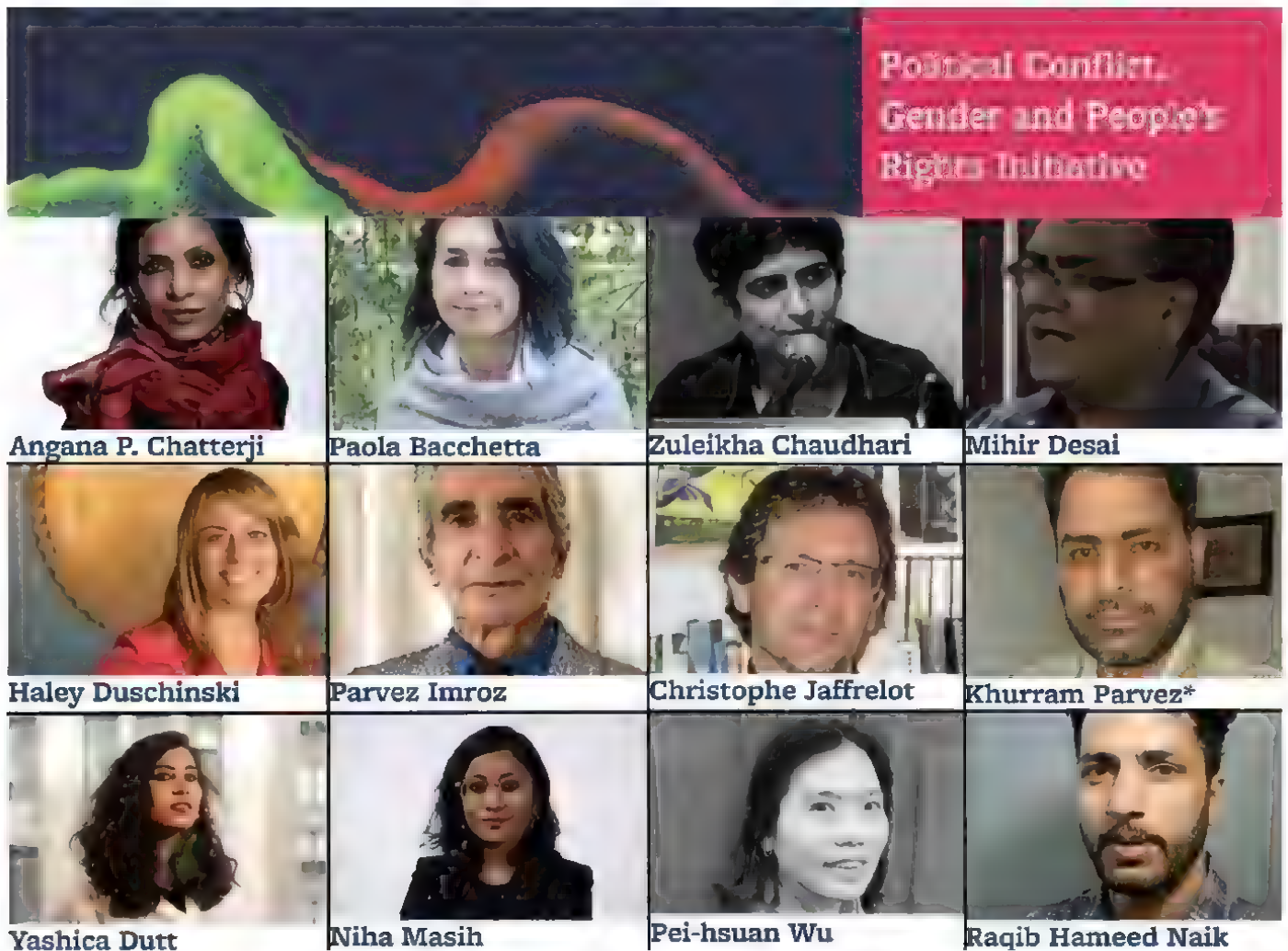
- She has worked with and assisted Angana Chatterji on Kashmir Project.
- Research and Communications Assistant with the International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Kashmir from 2008-2012.



Raqib Hameed Naik

- Current owner of Hindutva Watch.
- Former international correspondent with The Globe Post.
- Pulitzer Center grantee.
- Ex-News Director of TwoCircles.net

PCRes has been actively hosting events since October 2023, focusing on topics like Caste ine, Islamophobia, Hindu Nationalism, Indian elections 2024, and Manipur (in partnership with Niang Hangzo, Co-Founder of NAMTA), coinciding with the lead up to the 2024 elections.



Audrey Truschke, who established the South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC) in July 2021, also received funding from HLF in May 2023 and published a *"Reporting Guide on Hindu Nationalism,"* citing the discredited Pakistani project, *"HindutvaWatch"*.

South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC)

Board Members:



Audrey Truschke
Rutgers University

Member of American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS)
AIPS 2012-13 Fellow to Pakistan.
Member of Board of Advisors of Students Against
Hindutva Ideology (SAHI)



Manan Ahmed
Columbia University

Mentor of Audrey Truschke.
Trustee of American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS)
Member of the Project "MUSLIMS IN INDIA" funded by
Henry Luce Foundation.



Dheepa Sundaram
University of Denver

2023 Luce-AAR Advancing Public Scholarship Grant
Headed "Hindutva-Explained" Project from the grant.

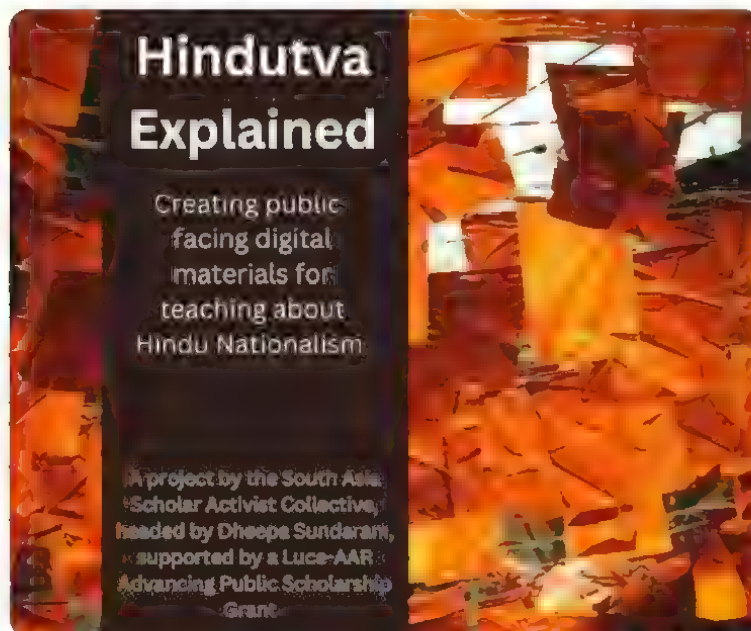
DisinfoLab
thedisinfolab.org



IndiaExplained
@IndiaExplained

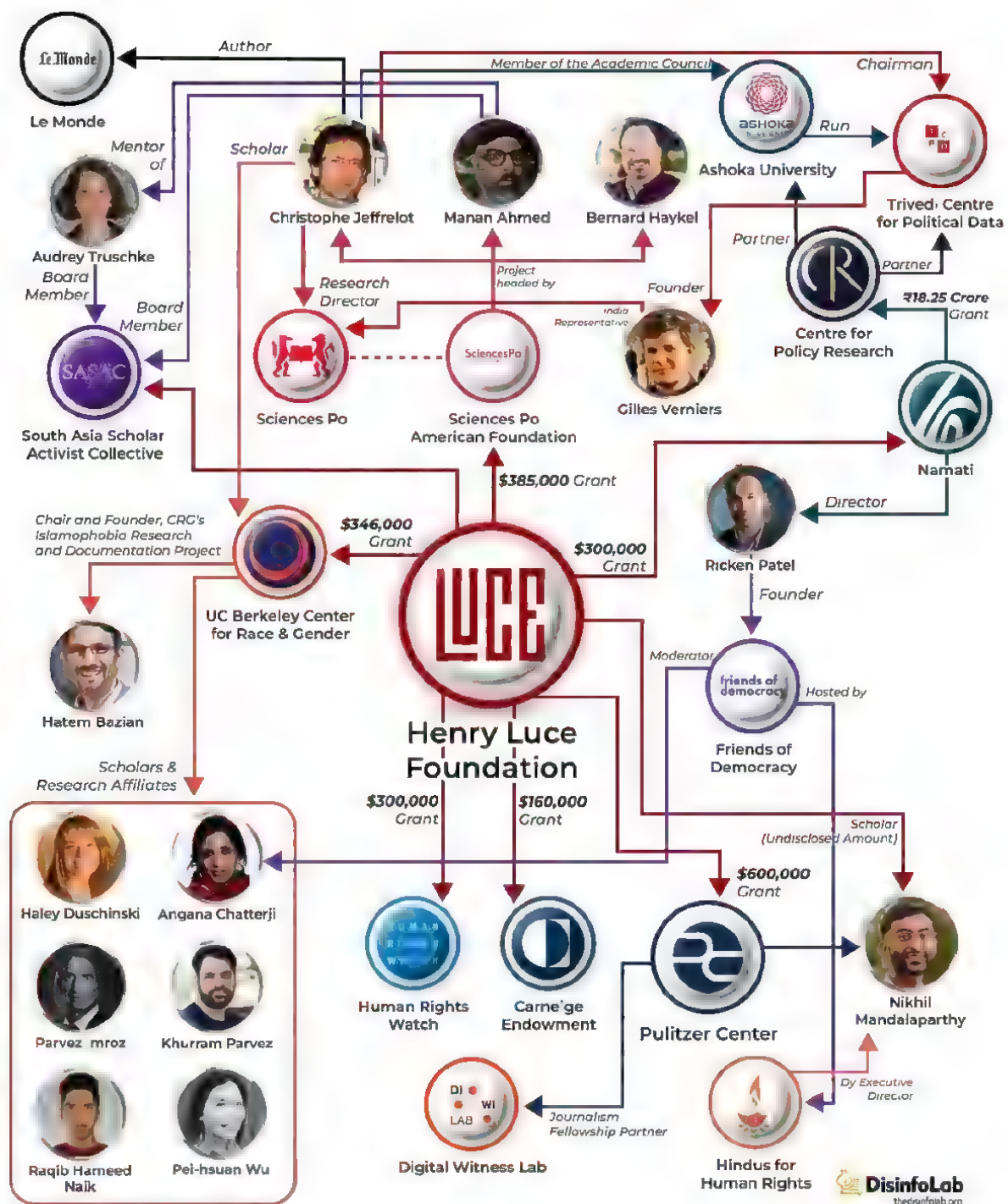
...

Delighted to share that the South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC), to which I am honored to belong, has just been awarded this grant by the American Academy of Religion and Henry Luce Foundation



11:12 PM · May 11, 2023 · 1,701 Views

In summary, HLF, known for its ties to the deep state, has invested millions of dollars in organizations with overtly anti-India biases, strategically timed to coincide with the Indian election cycle. Unlike the Russia Hoax against Donald Trump, this constitutes election interference by the book.



Entering Soros! Intriguingly, the organizations and individuals funded by HLF largely overlap with those supported by the Soros network. Notably, NAMAT , founded by Canadian Ricken Pate , received \$300,000 from HLF in 2022 and \$13,859,970 from OSF between 2016 and 2022.

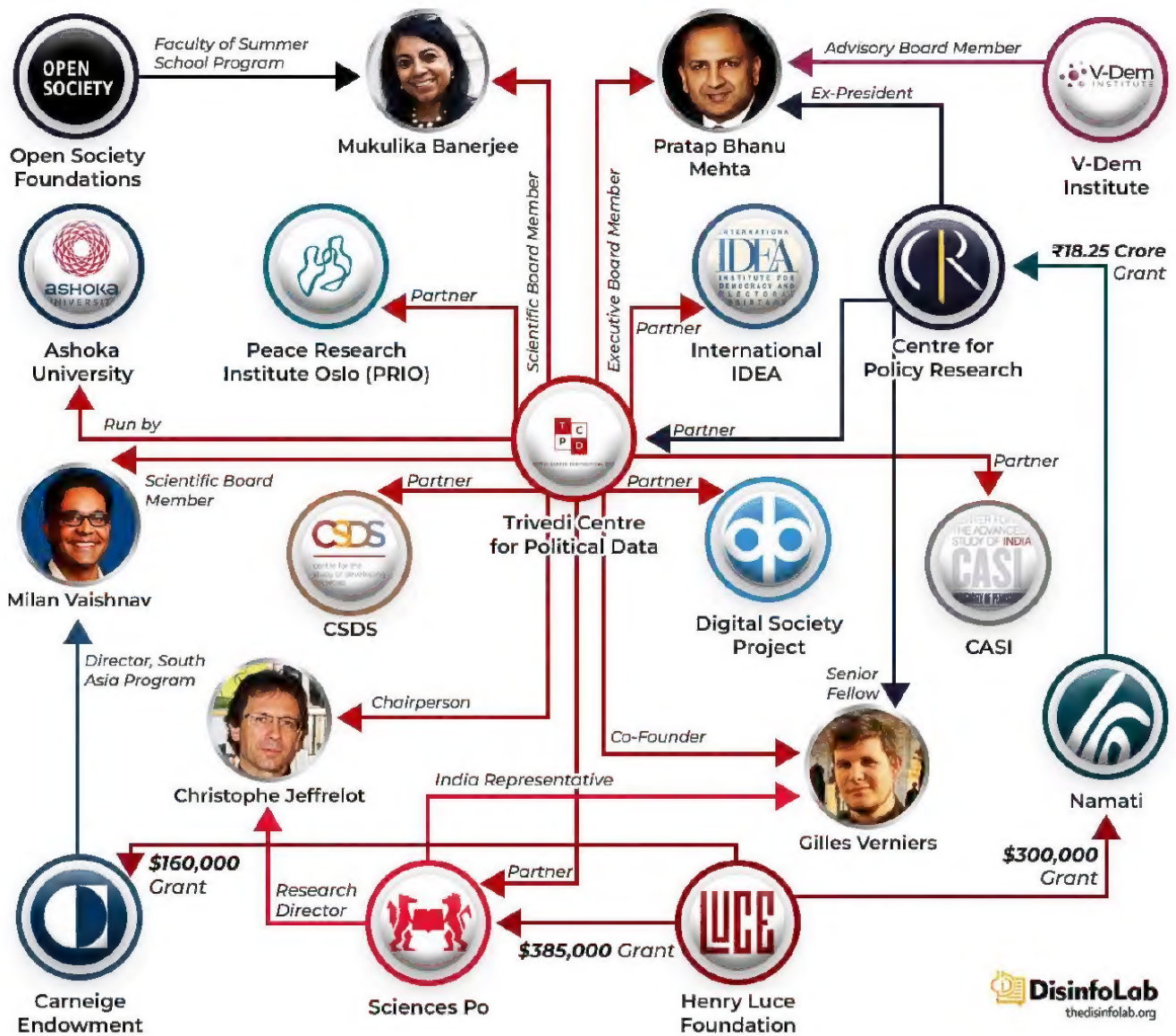
[HOME](#) / [GRANTS](#)

To support grassroots policy development activities related to democracy, ethics, and public trust.

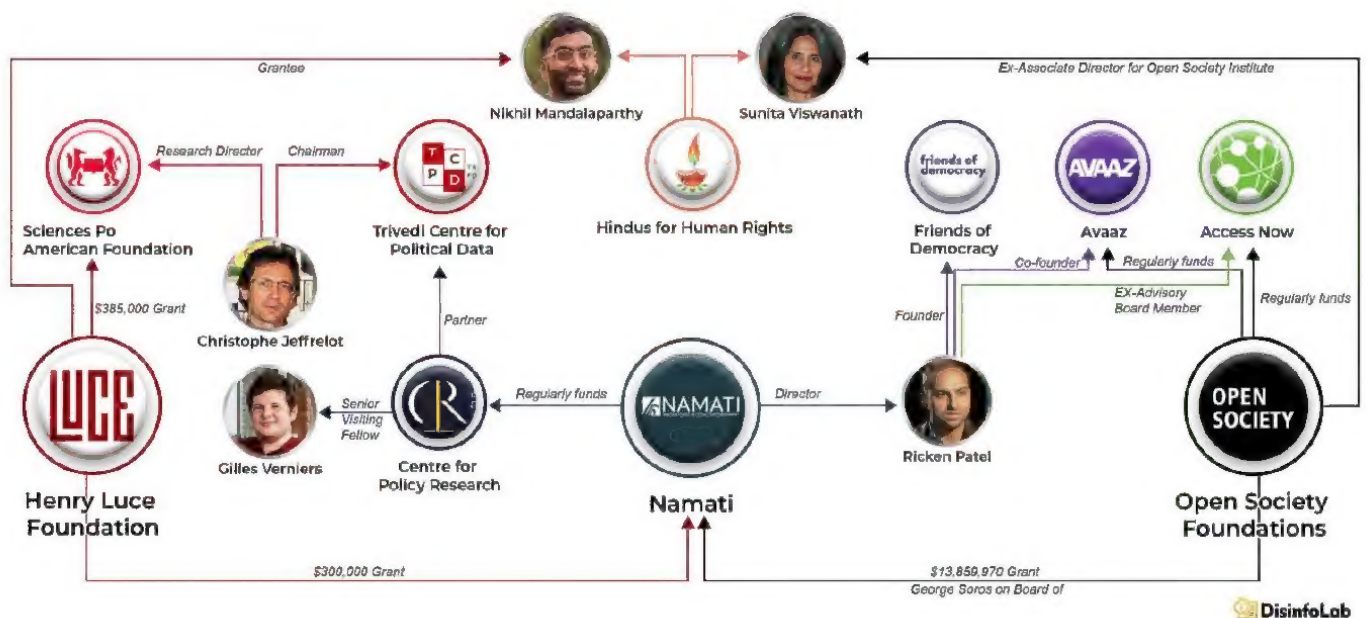
Namati

AMOUNT	\$300,000
AWARD DATE	March 10, 2022
LOCATION	Washington, District of Columbia, United States, Mideast Region
PROGRAM	Democracy, Ethics, and Public Trust
WEBSITE	https://namati.org/

Namati redirects its focus towards TCPD, receiving financial backing from Luce/Soros, which subsequently funneled funds to the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), a collaborative organization with TCPD, amounting to at least Rs 12 crore. Jaffrelot was hosted by TCPD. However, funding issues arose, leading to the Indian Income Tax Department revoking CPR's FCRA.



Patel, known for his serial activism, previously established AVAAZ, Respublica, and Moveon, and served on Access Now's advisory board—all entities supported by the Open Society Foundations (OSF). In March 2023, Ricken Patel of NAMATI assumed leadership of 'Friends of Democracy,' advocating against the ruling party to protect India. Coincidentally, another entity, Friends of Democracy PAC, was co-founded by Jonathan Soros, son of George Soros.



How does 'Friends of Democracy' contribute to India's salvation? By disseminating propaganda against India's procurement of Russian oil. If there's any uncertainty about the narrative, Patel has provided clarity on the matter.

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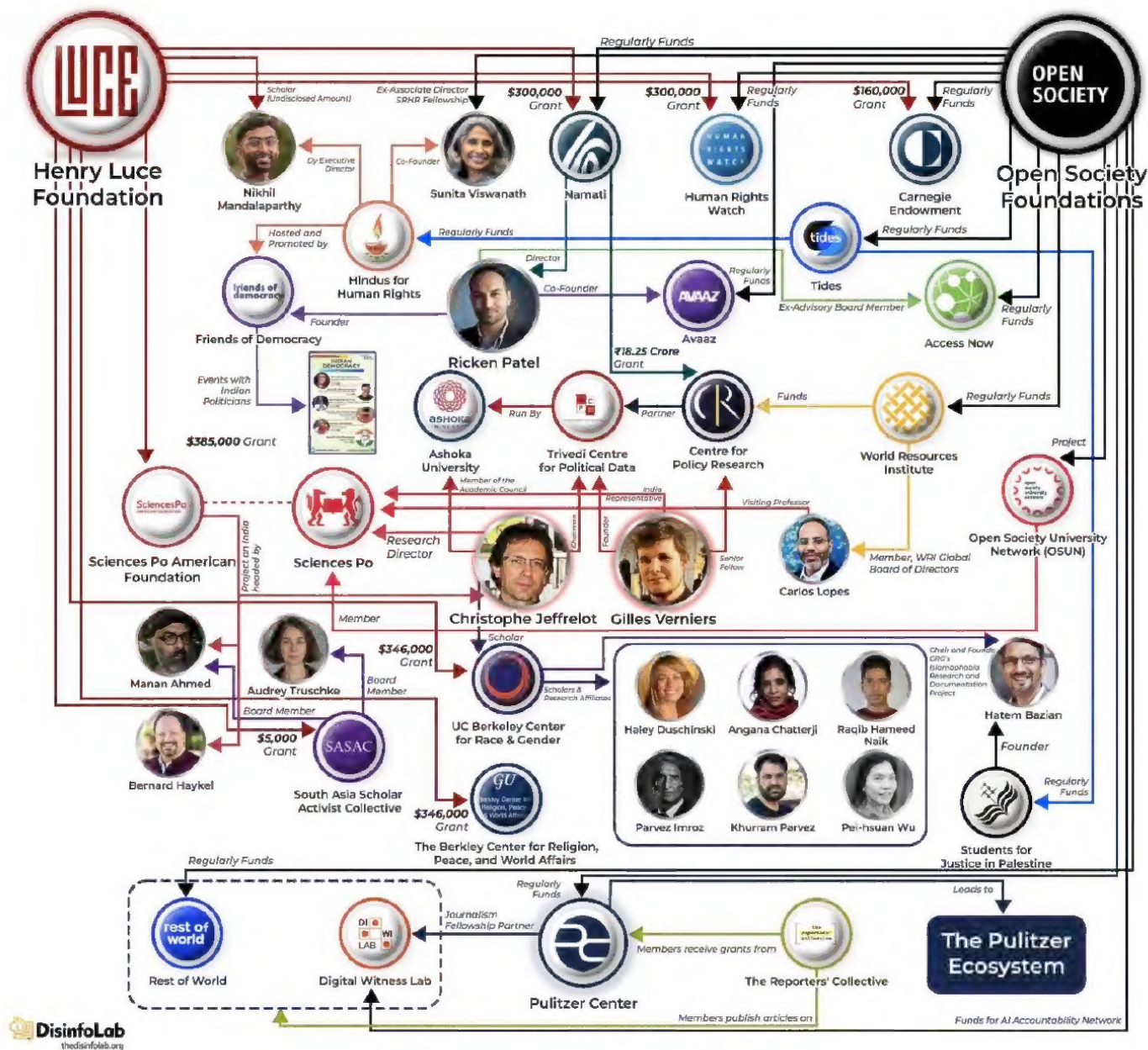


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India spent \$61.2 billion on Russian fossil fuels since the start of the Ukraine war

India spent more on Russian fossil fuels since Ukraine invasion than US, UK, Germany and France have given in military aid, new analysis shows

Their strategy involves propagandizing against India's purchase of Russian oil. While the extent of influence wielded by these narratives, promoted by partly discredited activists and scholars, on Indian voters remains speculative, their infiltration into societal divides is undeniable.



Even more alarming is the enduring impact—'scholars' such as Audreys and Jaffrelots mutually validate each other, establishing an extensive reference network that will likely shape the narrative on India for the foreseeable future. For instance, Wikipedia. These narratives will subsequently feed into AI models, further perpetuating the tarnished portrayal of India's history, anchored in the work of discredited scholars, and perpetuated endlessly in printed materials.

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